Nuts & Bolts DoD Fire Fighter Certification

Certification Processing Time

The internal suspense used at the DoD Fire Fighter Certification System (FFCS) Administration Center is 30 calendar days. This represents the maximum time we allow for processing certification packages. Normally, processing time is far less than 30 days.

Every attempt is made to process packages as soon as possible. However, because of the impact of certification (promotion, hiring, awarding skill levels, etc.) the staff attempts to process each package equally, without giving any particular package an advantage over the other. There are some special circumstances, such as tech school classes, that are processed more quickly.

Requests for certification based on completion of career development courses (CDC) and those based on reciprocity are processed a little differently because different steps must be taken. It looks something like this:

CDC: Received – logged in the certification tracking system (CTS) – assigned to evaluator - validate prerequisites – validate CDC completion card – check for proper level of evaluator – check for 10 day advance notification for performance test – log into the Certification Lookup System (CLS) database or return to base for correction – print certificate – log out of CTS – mail certificate – file

RECIPROCITY: Received – logged in the CTS – assign to evaluator – validate prerequisites – Validate non-DoD certificate (check IFSAC/NPQS database) – check for fire chiefs signature – log into the CLS database or return to base for correction – print certificate – log out of CTS – mail certificate – file

It may take more time to process packages that of poor quality (illegible certification/seal numbers, etc.). Also, when irregularities in certifications (incorrect spelling, evidence of tampering with certificates, etc.) or fraudulent certificates are suspected, the package will be delayed for investigation.

What can be done to minimize the time required to process packages?
1. Log the package into the CLS (log by package, not by individual) before mailing it and place the bar code on top of the package for easy scanning.
2. Make sure the package is complete and legible.
3. Make sure the checklist for each certification has been completed
4. Make sure the fire chief signs the request letter.

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